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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
Margaret M. Heckler, Secretary



PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE  
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PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS  
(USPHS 324-990)  
ISSN 0090-2818

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*Public Health Reports* is published six times a year.

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Editor, *Public Health Reports*  
Rm. 721-H, Hubert H. Humphrey Bldg.,  
200 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, D.C. 20201  
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neck of the involved hip; cases of osteoarthritis involving both femoral and acetabular surfaces; and cases of idiopathic osteonecrosis where there is radiographic evidence of enough sound bone to seat the prosthesis.

Precautionary statements in labeling of the device stress that important factors in its use include careful selection of patients with an eye to their level of activity and their understanding and acceptance of a postoperative regimen of guarded activities, with limited loading of the affected extremity, while tissue ingrowth is occurring. (Limitations on full weight bearing are recommended for up to 6 months following surgery.)

The new device, known as the Porocoat Modified Austin-Moore Total Hip Prosthesis, is manufactured by Depuy, Division of Boehringer Mannheim Corporation, Warsaw, Ind.

### Half of the 1983 Plague Cases Reported in the United States Occurred in Indians

Thirty-seven confirmed cases of plague and six deaths were reported

in the United States in 1983. Nineteen of the 37 cases occurred in the Indian population, as did 3 of the deaths. All cases in Indians were reported from Arizona and New Mexico and all but four were reported from the Navajo Reservation. The 19 cases occurred in both sexes and in persons from 5 to 65 years of age. In addition to the 19 confirmed cases, there was also 1 presumptive case and 1 suspect case among Indians. Bubonic, septicemic, and pneumonic plague forms were reported.

The staff of the Indian Health Service (IHS) conducted epidemiologic investigations of each case. They were assisted in these investigations, which included the trapping of small animals, by staff from the Plague Branch of the Centers for Disease Control in Fort Collins, Colo. Analysis of flea and blood specimens from the trapped animals helped the investigators determine the source of the plague exposure and the extent of any existing epizootic in the animal population. The Indian population was alerted to the potential threat through ongoing surveillance and health education. The lower than expected plague fatality rate among

the Indians was believed to be due to the timely management of the plague cases by the IHS medical staff.

The 37 cases of plague in 1983 was the highest number reported since a 1924 outbreak in Los Angeles, in which there were 40 cases. Plague was introduced into San Francisco in 1900, and by the end of an outbreak there in 1904, 118 of the 121 plague victims had died. Human plague was reported in only half of the years from 1904 to 1964. However, from 1965 on, human plague cases have been reported each year, and from 1975 to 1982, there were 16 cases of plague each year. The increased amount of plague activity in 1983 suggests that 1984 may be another active year.

—BRUCE R. CHELIKOWSKY, Indian Health Service

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